LATAR Orchardgrass - An Exceptionally High - quality Variety

9-90256

LATAR ORCHARDGRASS
Dactylis glomerata L.

ORIGIN

Introduced from Leningrad, U.S.S.R. in 1934. After selection at the SCS Plant Materials Center, Pullman, Washington, Latar was cooperatively released in 1957 by the Soil Conservation Service and the Washington and Idaho Agricultural Experiment Stations. It was registered in 1958.

DESCRIPTION

Latar orchardgrass is unique among all known orchardgrass varieties in feeding value. Extensive tests in the laboratory and feeding trials with sheep show that Latar orchardgrass is the orchardgrass lowest in lignin (fibre) content and highest in digestibility. It has 10 percent more feed value than commercial orchardgrass and yields as much per acre. Its leafiness, late maturity, high quality and good summer growth characteristics makes it an ideal companion grass for use with alfalfa for hay, pasture, and silage. Unlike most other orchardgrasses, it is in the pre-bloom stage when alfalfa is ready to cut, yet does not slow the growth of the alfalfa.

ADAPTATION AND USE

Latar orchardgrass is adapted to the same climatic and soil conditions as are other commonly used orchardgrass varieties. Well-drained., medium-textured, fertile arable soils that are moderately acid to moderately alkaline in reaction give best results. (The average annual rainfall should be 18 inches or more under sub-humid conditions, and) season-long water is required under irrigated conditions. (On non-irrigated land, Latar orchardgrass is best adapted to Prairie soils and the soils associated with them; namely, Chernozem, Brown Forest, and Alluvial soils.) Latar is cold tolerant but will survive temperatures of -20°F only when dormant or when there is a snow cover. Close grazing in the fall of the year is consistently associated with winter kill. Its high palatability to all classes of livestock make it susceptible to over-grazing. A minimum requirement is rotation grazing with a regrowth period of no less than 28 days. When cut or grazed, there is a delay of 7 to 10 days in regrowth, but recovery is rapid.

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SEEDBED

Moist, weed-free, firm seedbeds are required.

SEEDING

Whether for hay or pasture, planting Latar and the legume in alternate rows is the preferred method of seeding. In alternate rows, the seeding rate is 3 pounds per acre. Alfalfa at 5 pounds is used with Latar when the stand is used for hay and 3 pounds when the stand is pastured. For seed production, plant in rows spaced 30 to 36 inches apart at 2 to 3 pounds per acre. The seed is small and should not be planted deeper than 3/4 inch. Spring seedings have been most successful.

Pure live seed requirement for ACP is 75%.
Seed weighs 17 pounds per bushel.
There are 500,000 seeds per pound.
At 3 pounds of seed per acre in 12 inch drill rows, alternate 6 inch rows with a legume there are 35 seeds per foot of drill row.

MANAGEMENT

The management of Latar orchardgrass-alfalfa mixtures for hay is standard for legume-grass mixtures insofar as fertilization and irrigation are concerned. The crop is cut when the alfalfa is at the optimum hay stage, but never later than one-fourth bloom. Extra care must be taken when using Latar in pasture mixtures. In the first production year, the first crop should be cut for hay. Subsequently, rotation grazing with a 28 to 35 day regrowth period is essential to avoid over use of the exceptionally palatable Latar.

Latar seed fields should be harvested at the soft dough stage to avoid excessive shatter losses. The binder has proven most efficient; however, several successful growers have harvested seed with a swather and pickup combine.